United Nations S/2017/606

Security Council

Distr.: General
14 July 2017

Original: English

Letter dated 11 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to attach herewith the press statement issued by the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sudan on 10 July 2017, in which it welcomes the statement issued by the United Nations country team in the Sudan on the marked improvement of humanitarian access in the country (see annex).

In its statement, the country team confirmed the following:

> The revision of the Government of the Sudan's Directives and Procedures for Humanitarian Action in December 2016 has allowed for improvements in the scope and quality of humanitarian access. Recent months have seen United Nations agencies and partners increasingly working in areas that were previously inaccessible, to carry out needs assessments and provide humanitarian assistance. Notable areas of increased access include parts of the Jebel Marra region in Darfur, some of which had remained inaccessible to humanitarian actors for the past seven years.

(*Signed*) Omer Dahab Fadl **Mohamed**
Permanent Representative

17-11958 (E) 180717 180717

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 11 July 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Information Department

Press statement

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomes the statement that the United Nations country team in the Sudan issued on Monday, 10 July 2017. In that statement, the country team expressed its hopes for a positive decision on the lifting of the American sanctions that have been imposed on the Sudan. The Ministry expresses its satisfaction that the facts and evidence contained in the statement confirmed that the Sudan and the international community are cooperating closely with regard to humanitarian matters at the regional and international levels.

The Ministry greatly appreciates the constructive tone of the statement and reiterates that the Government of the Sudan welcomes the American proposal to deliver humanitarian assistance to the Two Areas, particularly given the heightened confidence and optimism that was engendered by the decision of the President of the Republic to extend the unilateral ceasefire and in view of the continued provision of humanitarian assistance by official and civilian State institutions to their brethren in South Sudan.

The Ministry takes this opportunity to reiterate that the Government of the Sudan is determined and committed to continuing and enhancing its cooperation with the United Nations and all humanitarian partners. It will make every effort to achieve lasting peace and sustained development in the country and work diligently with regional and international partners to maintain international peace and security.

Issued on 10 July 2017

Ambassador Qaribullah **Khidr**
Official spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic]

Statement attributable to the United Nations Country Team in Sudan

United Nations Hopes for Positive Decision on US Sanctions Relief

Khartoum, 10 July 2017. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Sudan acknowledges that there has been a marked improvement in humanitarian access over the past six months, since Executive Order 13761 was signed on 13 January 2017, as a result of improved engagement between the Government of Sudan and humanitarian actors. The revision of the Government of Sudan's Directives and Procedures for Humanitarian Action in December 2016 has allowed for improvements in the scope and quality of humanitarian access. Recent months have seen UN agencies and partners increasingly working in areas that were previously inaccessible, to carry out needs assessments and provide humanitarian assistance. Notable areas of increased access include parts of the Jebel Marra region in Darfur, some of which had remained inaccessible to humanitarian actors for the past seven years.

While full humanitarian access remains a challenge in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states — particularly in areas under the control of armed groups, which remain inaccessible — UN agencies and partners are now able to provide humanitarian assistance in a number of government-controlled areas which were previously blocked. This has allowed essential assistance to reach previously underserved communities, including assistance in health, food, nutrition, water, sanitation, child protection, education and mine action. In response to the declaration of famine in parts of South Sudan in February 2017, the UNCT has worked closely with the Government of Sudan to support South Sudanese refugees inside Sudan, as well as to establish and operationalise three humanitarian corridors, facilitating the delivery of essential food aid to South Sudan.

Improved engagement between humanitarian actors and the Government of Sudan has recently led to agreement on a set of positive reforms to recruitment procedures for INGOs, increasing their operational independence in the country. The UNCT has also observed increased acceptance for national NGOs working in the field, as well as increased engagement of civil society and the private sector on humanitarian issues.

While the UNCT recognises that regulatory improvements can take time to fully materialise on the ground, and that some issues remain to be addressed, the past months have clearly shown that constructive engagement is the best way to maintain the progress already made, as well as to collectively resolve pending issues.

The UNCT looks forward to the decision that will shortly be taken on the sanctions, and is committed to continue its engagement in order to further improve humanitarian access.